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WELCOME FROM THE CHAIRMAN

On behalf of the board of Football Federation Australia, it is with great pleasure that I welcome our distinguished guests, players, officials and supporters to the match between the Qantas Socceroos and Denmark.

Football in Australia is experiencing unparalleled success and the continued development of our national team is vital to continuing to build on the tremendous results of the team at the World Cup. Our matches in London have been well supported and we continue to give our players much needed games together without having to travel back to Australia.

This year we will compete in the finals of the AFC Asian Cup for the first time and this match against Denmark is an important step on the path to that tournament. We are sure that many people who came to Germany from England to support the team at the World Cup will also follow the team closely in Asia. Thank you for your support and best wishes.

Frank Lowy AC
Chairman, Football Federation Australia

CONTENTS

4 DANISH DREAMS *COACH GRAHAM ARNOLD RATES THE SOCCEROOS' CHANCES AGAINST THE SCANDINAVIAN HEAVYWEIGHTS*

7 AUSTRALIA PLAYER PROFILES

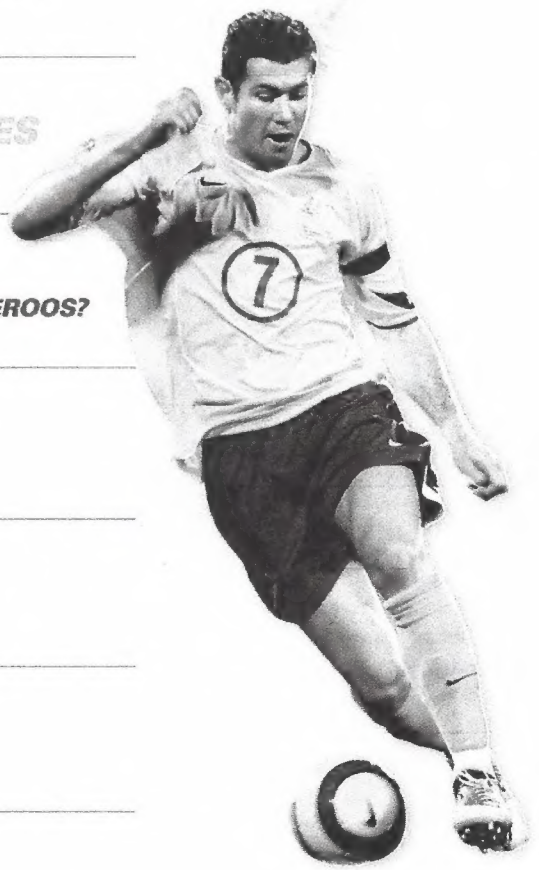
11 DENMARK PLAYER PROFILES

14 AIMING HIGH *WHAT WILL 2007 BRING FOR THE SOCCEROOS?*

17 SOCCEROOS IN LONDON *AUSTRALIA'S WINNING HISTORY*

19 Q&A *DENMARK'S DANIEL AGGER*

22 FACTS AND FIGURES *DENMARK IN NUMBERS*



GETTTY IMAGES

DANISH DREAMS

AFTER AN IMPRESSIVE YEAR ON THE WORLD STAGE THE SOCCEROOS HAVE THE CHANCE TO PROVE THEIR METTLE IN A MATCH AGAINST AN IN-FORM DENMARK. SAM BISHOP REPORTS

The last time a Socceroos side played Scandanavian opposition, the then-coach Frank Farina described himself in the wake of the 2-2 draw with Norway at Craven Cottage as "semi-happy". That was in November 2004, and the result flattered a Socceroos side ranked 49 in the world, 14 places below their opposition. Today, more than two years and an epic World Cup campaign later, it's hard to imagine anyone within the Australian football fraternity being happy with anything other than a win against Denmark, despite the Socceroos being 16 places below the Danes in world football's pecking order.

Such has been the rise of Australian football since the Socceroos qualified for the World Cup in November 2005 that respectable results against highly fancied opposition are simply not good enough for a side with lofty ambitions, chief of which is winning the Asian Cup this European summer. And so it's with one eye on the ultimate prize of 2007 that Australia manager Graham Arnold and his team begin the international season against a formidable opposition.

In 2006, Denmark lost only one of their 12 games, and that came against eventual World Cup runners-up France in a pre-tournament friendly last May. Eight wins and three draws in their remaining contests, including victories against Poland (2-0), South Korea (3-1) and World Cup semi-finalists Portugal (4-2), proved they were one of the best sides to have missed out on qualification for Germany.

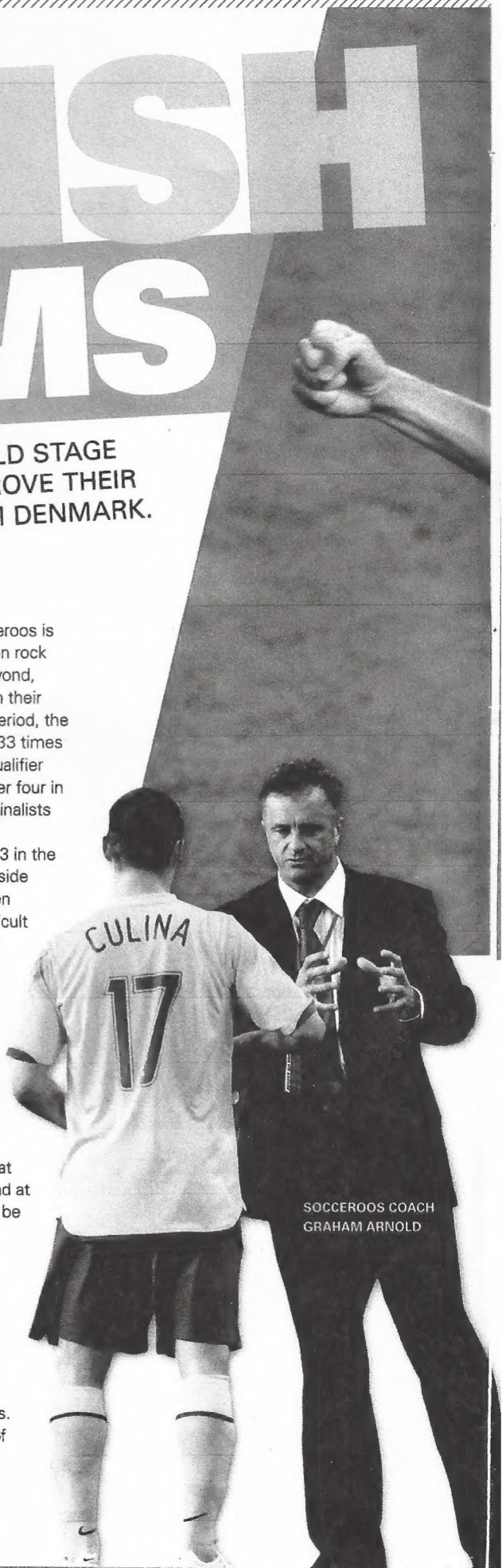
An added concern for the Socceroos is that Denmark's defence has been rock solid through that period and beyond, having conceded only 10 goals in their past 15 matches. In that same period, the Danes found the opposition net 33 times — six of those in a World Cup qualifier against lowly Georgia, but another four in a 4-2 romp over Germany semi-finalists Portugal.

"Denmark are ranked number 23 in the world and are probably the best side in Scandinavia along with Sweden — they're going to be a very difficult task," Arnold says. "They've got very good, committed players and a lot of pace in their side with [Dennis] Rommedahl and [Jesper] Grønkjær, so they are a very good side.

"They have performed very well. Morten Olsen's a very good coach and if anything they're a very similar style of football to Australia in the fact that they're very fit, they're mobile and at the same time very physical. It'll be an interesting game."

Matching the intensity of the Danes is key to the Socceroos' chances of starting 2007 on a high note. In a rarity for an Australian side, the battle for physical superiority looks set to swing the balance of power in a number of key individual contests.

Sound defence, a cornerstone of Australian sides in the



SOCCEROOS COACH GRAHAM ARNOLD

"DENMARK HAVE VERY GOOD, COMMITTED PLAYERS AND A LOT OF PACE IN THEIR SIDE"

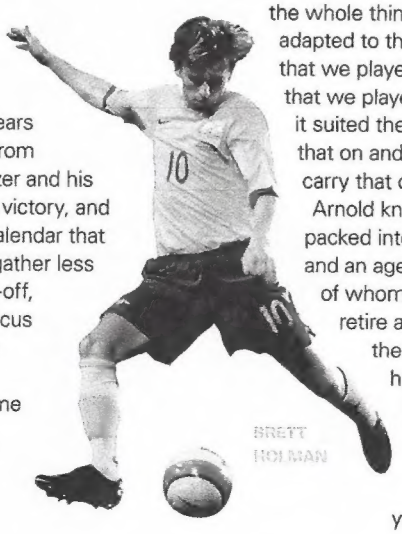
DENMARK FORWARD JON DAHL TOMASSON (LEFT) CELEBRATING WITH WINGER DENNIS ROMMEDAHL

GETTY IMAGES

post-Farina era, is paramount for the Socceroos in their search for victory.

In that match against Norway more than two years ago, a brace of blunders from goalkeeper Mark Schwarzer and his defenders cost the side a victory, and with the limitations of a calendar that only allows the squad to gather less than 48 hours before kick-off, Arnold says the tactical focus will stay the same for this clash.

"You don't have much time to work with them," he says. "After the way we performed with Guus [Hiddink] and myself in charge I'd be crazy to try and change the whole thing because they adapted to the whole style that we played and the system that we played very well and it suited them. We've carried that on and will continue to carry that on."



BRETT HOLMAN

Arnold knows that with a packed international calendar and an ageing squad, many of whom are expected to retire at some time in the next 12 months, he will be relying on the adaptability and commitment of his younger brigade. The youth policy saw promising performances from Patrick Kisnorbo, Michael Thwaite and Brett Holman in their friendly against Ghana late last year, and with more friendlies allowing the coaching staff to experiment with rising stars, Arnold says he expects to use this clash as a platform for introducing more youngsters to international football.

"You can't throw in too many youngsters at once," Arnold says. "The transitional period has to be slow. So we managed to convince a couple of guys that will probably retire after the Asian Cup to at least stay on until then."

If Arnold's youngsters can pick up where the elder brigade intends to leave off, beginning with a win against Denmark, Australia could leave another indelible mark on football in 2007. ■

Q. WHEN DID AUSTRALIA LAST PLAY DENMARK?

A. AUSTRALIA HAVE NEVER PLAYED DENMARK

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AUSTRALIA

GRAHAM ARNOLD
COACH
GAMES COACHED: 5
AGE: 43
DEBUT: June 2006

MICHAEL PETKOVIC
GOALKEEPER
CAPS: 4 **GOALS:** 0
DEBUT: February 2001
CLUB: Trabzonspor (Turkey)
AGE: 30
HEIGHT: 190cm
WEIGHT: 85kg

MARK SCHWARZER
GOALKEEPER
CAPS: 44 **GOALS:** 0
DEBUT: July 1993
CLUB: Middlesbrough (England)
AGE: 34 **HEIGHT:** 193cm
WEIGHT: 92kg

MICHAEL BEAUCHAMP
DEFENDER
CAPS: 5 **GOALS:** 0
DEBUT: February 2006
CLUB: FC Nurenberg (Germany)
AGE: 25 **HEIGHT:** 191cm
WEIGHT: 85kg

PATRICK KISNORBO
DEFENDER
CAPS: 8 **GOALS:** 0
DEBUT: July 2002
CLUB: Leicester City (Eng)
AGE: 25
HEIGHT: 185cm
WEIGHT: 75kg

LUCAS NEILL
DEFENDER
CAPS: 31 **GOALS:** 0
DEBUT: October 1996
CLUB: West Ham (England)
AGE: 28
HEIGHT: 183cm
WEIGHT: 78kg

CRAIG MOORE
DEFENDER
CAPS: 38 **GOALS:** 3
DEBUT: June 1995
CLUB: Newcastle United (England)
AGE: 31
HEIGHT: 186cm
WEIGHT: 76kg

MICHAEL THWAITE
DEFENDER
CAPS: 3 **GOALS:** 0
DEBUT: October 2005
CLUB: Wisla Krakow (Poland)
AGE: 23
HEIGHT: 179cm
WEIGHT: 74kg

TIM CAHILL
MIDFIELDER
CAPS: 22 **GOALS:** 11
DEBUT: March 2004
CLUB: Everton (England)
AGE: 27
HEIGHT: 178cm
WEIGHT: 65kg

MARK BRESCIANO
MIDFIELDER
CAPS: 31 **GOALS:** 8
DEBUT: June 2001
CLUB: Palermo (Italy)
AGE: 26
HEIGHT: 172cm
WEIGHT: 76kg

JOSIP SKOKO
MIDFIELDER
CAPS: 49 **GOALS:** 9
DEBUT: March 1997
CLUB: Wigan Athletic (England)
AGE: 31
HEIGHT: 177cm
WEIGHT: 77kg

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BRETT EMERTON
MIDFIELDER
CAPS: 54 **GOALS:** 11
DEBUT: February 1998
CLUB: Blackburn Rovers (England)
AGE: 27
HEIGHT: 185cm
WEIGHT: 85kg

JASON CULINA
MIDFIELDER
CAPS: 20 **GOALS:** 1
DEBUT: February 2005
CLUB: PSV Eindhoven (Netherlands)
AGE: 26
HEIGHT: 175cm
WEIGHT: 72kg

MILE STERJOVSKI
MIDFIELDER (RIGHT)
CAPS: 28 **GOALS:** 4
DEBUT: November 2000
CLUB: FC Basel (Switzerland)
AGE: 27
HEIGHT: 180cm
WEIGHT: 79kg

VINCE GRELLA
MIDFIELDER
CAPS: 25 **GOALS:** 0
DEBUT: February 2003
CLUB: Parma (Italy)
AGE: 27
HEIGHT: 183cm
WEIGHT: 79kg

LUKE WILKSHIRE
MIDFIELDER
CAPS: 13 **GOALS:** 0
DEBUT: October 2004
CLUB: FC Twente (Netherlands)
AGE: 25
HEIGHT: 175cm
WEIGHT: 72kg

SCOTT CHIPPERFIELD
MIDFIELDER (LEFT)
CAPS: 53 **Goals:** 11
DEBUT: September 1998
CLUB: FC Basel (Switzerland)
AGE: 31 **HEIGHT:** 180cm
WEIGHT: 70kg

MARK VIDUKA
STRIKER
CAPS: 37 **GOALS:** 6
DEBUT: June 1994
CLUB: Middlesbrough (England)
AGE: 31
HEIGHT: 188cm
WEIGHT: 97kg

JOHN ALOISI
STRIKER
CAPS: 49 **GOALS:** 26
DEBUT: March 1997
CLUB: Alaves (Spain)
AGE: 31
HEIGHT: 188cm
WEIGHT: 83kg

RYAN GRIFFITHS
STRIKER
CAPS: 2 **GOALS:** 0
DEBUT: September '06
CLUB: Rapid Bucharest (Romania)
AGE: 25
HEIGHT: 177cm
WEIGHT: 71kg

BRETT HOLMAN
STRIKER
CAPS: 3 **GOALS:** 0
DEBUT: February 2006
CLUB: NEC Nijmegen (Netherlands)
AGE: 22
HEIGHT: 180cm
WEIGHT: 70kg

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Q. WHEN WERE THE SOCCEROOS FOUNDED?
A. 1961

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DENMARK

MORTEN OLSEN
COACH
AGE: 57
GAMES COACHED: 71
DEBUT: August 2000

JESPER CHRISTIANSEN
GOALKEEPER
CAPS: 6 **GOALS:** 0
DEBUT: June 2005
CLUB: FC Copenhagen
AGE: 28
HEIGHT: 194cm
WEIGHT: 86kg

THOMAS SORENSEN
GOALKEEPER
CAPS: 59 **GOALS:** 0
DEBUT: November, 1999
CLUB: Aston Villa (England)
AGE: 30
HEIGHT: 195cm
WEIGHT: 89kg

DANIEL AGGER
DEFENDER
CAPS: 10 **GOALS:** 1
DEBUT: June, 2005
CLUB: Liverpool (England)
AGE: 22
HEIGHT: 187cm
WEIGHT: 75kg

LARS JACOBSEN
DEFENDER
CAPS: 8 **GOALS:** 0
DEBUT: March, 2006
CLUB: FC Copenhagen
AGE: 27
HEIGHT: 181cm
WEIGHT: 76kg

PER KRØLDRUP
DEFENDER
CAPS: 15 **GOALS:** 0
DEBUT: February, 2004
CLUB: Fiorentina (Italy)
AGE: 27
HEIGHT: 187cm
WEIGHT: 82kg

NICLAS JENSEN
DEFENDER
CAPS: 54 **GOALS:** 0
DEBUT: August 1998
CLUB: Fulham (England)
AGE: 32
HEIGHT: 180cm
WEIGHT: 77kg

BRIAN PRISKE
DEFENDER
CAPS: 22 **GOALS:** 0
DEBUT: February, 2003
CLUB: Club Brugge (Belgium)
AGE: 29
HEIGHT: 188cm
WEIGHT: 78kg

MICHAEL GRAVGAARD
DEFENDER
CAPS: 11 **GOALS:** 4
DEBUT: August, 2005
CLUB: FC Copenhagen
AGE: 28 **HEIGHT:** 186cm
WEIGHT: 88kg

CHRISTIAN POULSEN
MIDFIELDER
CAPS: 44 **GOALS:** 2
DEBUT: November, 2001
CLUB: Seville (Spain)
AGE: 26 **HEIGHT:** 182cm
WEIGHT: 76kg

Q. WHEN WAS THE DANISH TEAM FOUNDED?

A. 1889

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DANIEL JENSEN
MIDFIELDER
CAPS: 25 **GOALS:** 1
DEBUT: February, 2002
Club: Werder Bremen (Germany)
AGE: 27 **HEIGHT:** 179cm
WEIGHT: 71kg

DENNIS ROMMEDAHL
MIDFIELDER
CAPS: 62 **GOALS:** 13
DEBUT: August, 2000
CLUB: Charlton Athletic (England)
AGE: 28 **HEIGHT:** 178cm
WEIGHT: 68kg

RASMUS WÜRTZ
MIDFIELDER
CAPS: 4 **GOALS:** 0
DEBUT: June, 2005
CLUB: AaB
AGE: 23)
HEIGHT: 179cm
WEIGHT: 68kg

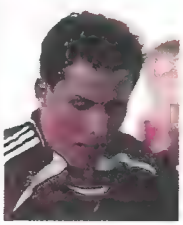
THOMAS KAHLENBERG
MIDFIELDER
CAPS: 11 **GOALS:** 1
DEBUT: April, 2003
CLUB: Auxerre (France)
AGE: 23
HEIGHT: 183cm
WEIGHT: 72kg

CLAUS JENSEN
MIDFIELDER
CAPS: 46 **GOALS:** 8
DEBUT: March, 2000
CLUB: Fulham (England)
AGE: 29
HEIGHT: 181cm
WEIGHT: 79kg

JON DAHL TOMASSON
STRIKER
CAPS: 85 **GOALS:** 43
DEBUT: March, 1997
CLUB: VfB Stuttgart (Germany)
AGE: 30 **HEIGHT:** 182CM
WEIGHT: 73kg

JESPER GRØNKJÆR
STRIKER
CAPS: 60 **GOALS:** 5
DEBUT: March, 1999
CLUB: FC Copenhagen
AGE: 29
HEIGHT: 187cm
WEIGHT: 85kg

NICLAS BENDTNER
STRIKER
CAPS: 4 **GOALS:** 2
DEBUT: August, 2006
CLUB: Birmingham City (England)
AGE: 19 **HEIGHT:** 193cm
WEIGHT: 84kg



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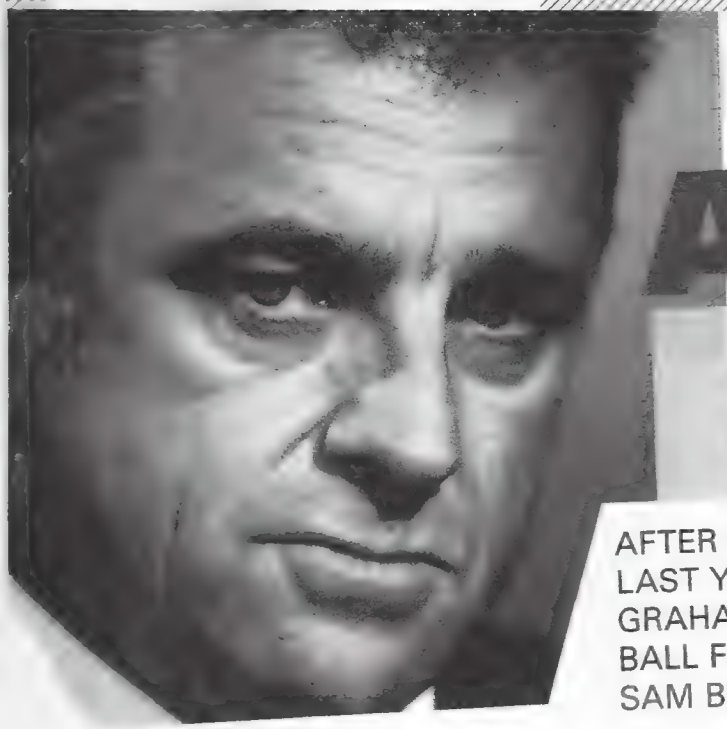
MORTEN NORDSTRAND ELSON
STRIKER
CAPS: 0 **GOALS:** 0
DEBUT: June 2005
CLUB: FC Nordsjælland
AGE: 23 **HEIGHT:** 177cm
WEIGHT: 71kg

MARTIN JØRGENSEN
STRIKER
CAPS: 76 **GOALS:** 12
DEBUT: March, 1998
CLUB: Fiorentina (Italy)
AGE: 31
HEIGHT: 180cm
WEIGHT: 76kg

Q. WHAT IS DENMARK'S CURRENT WORLD RANKING?

A. 23



AIMING HIGH

AFTER AN IMPRESSIVE WORLD CUP OUTING LAST YEAR, AUSTRALIA FOOTBALL COACH GRAHAM ARNOLD GAZES INTO THE CRYSTAL BALL FOR 2007 AND BEYOND. HE TELLS SAM BISHOP WHAT HE SEES

If 2006 was the year Australia put itself on the football map, 2007 should be the year the Socceroos look to expand the borders of their fledgling empire.

A World Cup campaign that exceeded most expectations, recognition that the side was the best in the Asian confederation, outright favourites to take the Asian Cup at the first time of asking and, last but not least, the continued growth of the domestic A-League competition all conspired to thrust Australia's footballing stocks off the relative charts.

"AS THE NUMBER ONE-RANKED NATION IN ASIA, EVERYONE WILL WANT TO BEAT US"

All of that is great news, according to Socceroos manager Graham Arnold, but it also means 2007 is going to be a year in which the side's on-field performance will be under the spotlight more than ever.

"You can't lie to the public and you can't bluff people when you're ranked number one in the confederation and you've won the [award for the] best team in Asia," he says. "You can't pretend to be underdogs. A bit of pressure is no problem.

"We are going into the tournament as the number one nation in Asia and favourites. As such, everyone will want to beat us, which will be a new feeling for us. We were favourites in Oceania, but Asia has much more difficult opposition. Going in as the number one nation, the expectancy level is there for us to perform, which is great. They've got a great opportunity to do well and be successful."

Arnold is already on the record saying he expects his side to perform well enough to earn at least a semi-final berth at the Asian Cup. It says a lot for the rise of Australian football over recent years that such an aim could be considered conservative.

But such was the focus on this year's campaign that in the days after Guus Hiddink's Socceroos bowed out of the World Cup in Germany, then-assistant manager Arnold and his team set about convincing some of the older players who may have been tempted by international retirement to stay on and take a shot at winning one last trophy.

"In preparing for the future there are players who I have convinced to stay on after the World Cup in a transitional period because you can't have mass retirements," he says. "If too many players walk out at once, our results may not have been as good as what they have been. This could have an effect on the whole game in general and the level of public interest."

Crucial to the Socceroos' success in Germany last year was a bumper international calendar which allowed the team to acclimatise and become one of the fittest heading into the tournament, and 2007 looks to be no different. The friendly against Denmark is the first of five heading in to the Asian tournament and will allow the players to move on from their first World Cup and towards success on the Asian stage and beyond.

"The big picture for me is 2010," Arnold says. "It's important that we do well in the Asian Cup, and by that I mean trying to win the Asian Cup. But the 2010 World Cup is what it is all about.

"We saw what an effect the World Cup had on the nation, so it is crucial that we qualify again — 2006 was a wonderful year for football in Australia, but that's over now, it's history and we've got to go and move forward. If we rest on our laurels, we'll find ourselves missing the World Cup in 2010." ■

JULY 8: *AUSTRALIA* ***V*** *OMAN (BANGKOK)*

JULY 13: *AUSTRALIA* ***V*** *IRAQ (BANGKOK)*

JULY 16: *AUSTRALIA* ***V*** *THAILAND (BANGKOK)*

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OCTOBER 9, 2005

Guus Hiddink's first game in charge of the Socceroos after Frank Farina's tenure ended also began in earnest the preparations for a tilt at a World Cup spot. After leaking goals at the Confederations Cup in Germany three months earlier, Hiddink's restructured three-man defence kept a vital clean sheet and allowed Mark Bresciano, Archie Thompson, Mark Viduka, John Aloisi and Joel Griffiths the time and space to get on the scoresheet. Three years after their first clash with an admittedly stronger Jamaica in Reading, the 5-0 result was, in hindsight, the beginning of a golden period for the Socceroos.

JUNE 9, 2005

Only a Simon Colosimo strike from 18 yards five minutes from time could break the deadlock as the Socceroos ended their Confederations Cup preparations with a hard-fought win in an uninspiring match. Australia's clean sheet would be their last until they met the Solomon Islands three months later, in which time they would concede 10 goals at the Confederations Cup. Had New Zealand had skipper Ryan Nelsen available and more preparation time under first-game coach Ricki Herbert, the Socceroos could have gone into the tournament in Germany on the back of an embarrassing loss.

SEPTEMBER 7, 2003

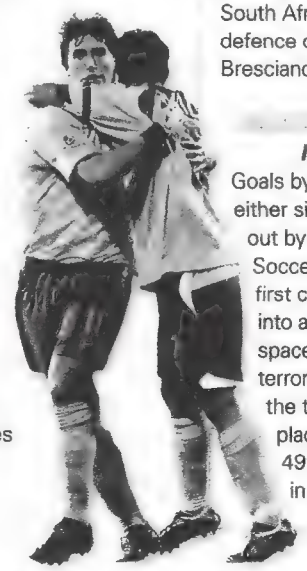
Fans will remember this game fondly if for nothing else than the sight of Harry Kewell at the top of his game terrorising the Jamaican midfield and defence. In the 57 minutes before he scored the winner, Kewell baffled the opposition, while Mark Bresciano, who scored the opener with a sweet right-footed volley, created chance after chance in the Jamaican penalty area.

MARCH 30, 2004

Less than three years ago, one of these sides was ranked 39 in the world while the other was at 85, and the result didn't go to form. Australia, barely holding onto its place in the top 100, knocked over Bafana Bafana despite the South Africans' ranking advantage of more than 40 places. Without stars Benni McCarthy, Mark Fish or Quinton Fortune, South Africa had little firepower and their defence could do nothing to stop a Mark Bresciano thunderbolt.

FEBRUARY 12, 2003

Englishmen will tell you it was a friendly and meant nothing. Aussies will tell you they don't care. In front of a heaving Upton Park, the Socceroos stunned Sven Goran-Eriksson's side, or two sides — the Swede swapped his entire lineup at half-time — by winning the unwinnable match. Tony Popovic nodded the Aussies in front and it wasn't until Harry Kewell made it 2-0 that Socceroos fans dared to dream. A kid called Wayne Rooney came on at half-time to make history as the youngest ever England player at 17 years and 111 days and Francis Jeffers scored his first — and only — international goal in his first — and only — appearance in for England. Brett Emerton sealed the win with a late goal and the Aussies haven't stopped gloating since.



NOVEMBER 16, 2004

Goals by Tim Cahill and Josip Skoko either side of the break were cancelled out by two defensive blunders in the Socceroos' own half as the Aussies first came from turned a 1-0 deficit into a squandered 2-1 lead in the space of 30 minutes. Tim Cahill terrorised the Norwegians, who at the time, were ranked 35 — 14 places above the Socceroos in 49th, while Brett Emerton turned in another stunning performance.

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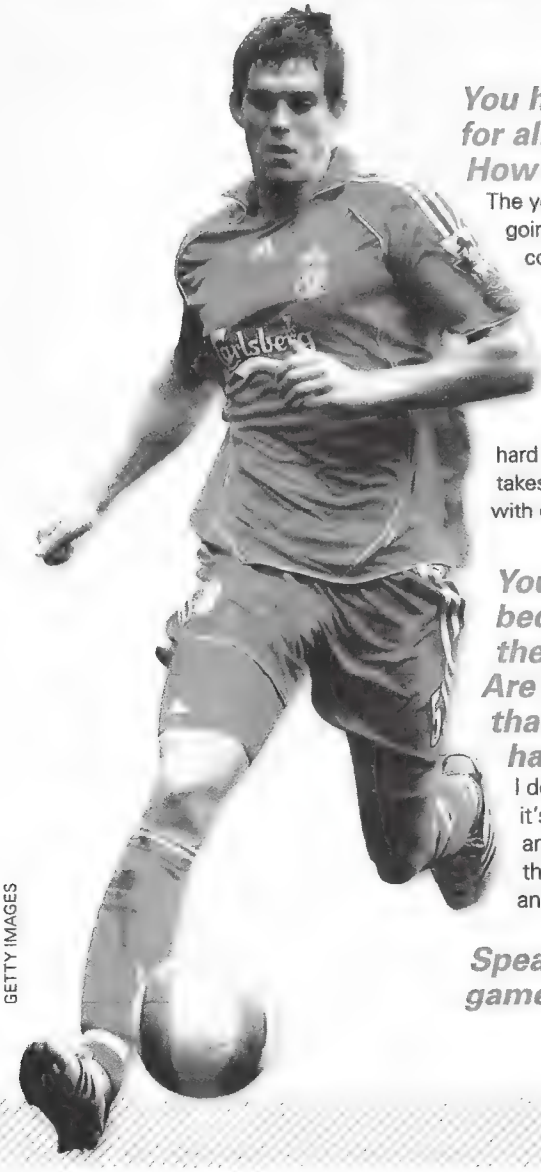

GETTY IMAGES

You have been in England for almost a year now. How has it been for you?

The year has passed and things are going well for me here. I can't complain. I feel good, especially outside the pitch, and of course it helps when you are getting minutes on the team. I personally think I've received a decent amount of games and minutes, but I've also worked hard to achieve it. But that's what it takes, and for now I'm very satisfied with everything here.

You have already become a regular on the national team. Are you surprised that everything has happened so fast?

I don't know if I'm surprised, but it's definitely positive. Everything around me happens very quickly these days, but I'm taking it easy, and taking it one day at a time.

Speaking about the game against Australia, what do you know about them? Did you follow their campaign during the World Cup in Germany?

I don't know much about them. But they qualified for the World Cup, so they're not a bad team. I know several of their players from the Premiership as well.

What are your expectations for the Danish national team in 2007?

I have great expectations. We will have some very exciting games, which will be fun to be a part of. I hope we can collect the necessary amount of points to finish in the top of our group, and collect one of the tickets for Euro 2008.

The national team will face tough opposition in 2007 with matches against Sweden and Spain. How do you feel about that?

I am certain it will be a lot of fun. I'm convinced we'll do well; I can't see why we wouldn't.

Interview: ***PETER BRIX/THE DANISH FA***

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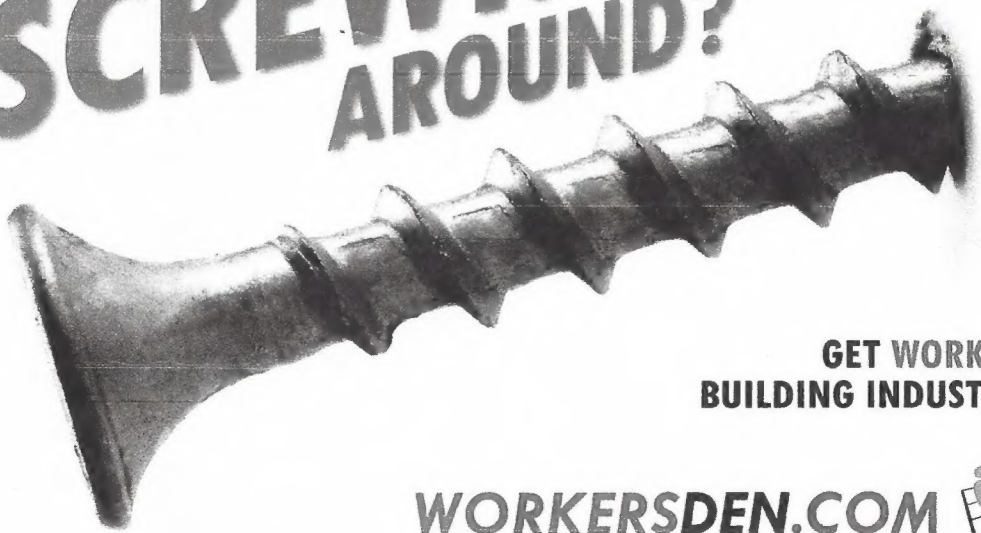

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1889

THE YEAR DANSK BOLDSPIL-UNION (THE DANISH FOOTBALL FEDERATION) WAS FOUNDED

129

THE NUMBER OF GAMES PLAYED BY PETER SCHMEICHEL, DENMARK'S MOST CAPPED PLAYER, BETWEEN 1987 AND 2001. HE SCORED ONE GOAL IN THIS TIME

52

THE NUMBER OF GOALS SCORED BY POUL 'TIST' NIELSEN, DENMARK'S HIGHEST GOALS-CORER, BETWEEN 1910 AND 1925. HE PLAYED 38 GAMES.

3 *THE NUMBER OF TIMES DENMARK HAVE MADE IT TO THE FINALS OF THE WORLD CUP (1986, 1998, 2002)*

5,427,459

THE POPULATION OF DENMARK ON JANUARY 1, 2006

14/05/2004

THE DATE AN AUSSIE BECAME PART OF THE DANISH ROYAL FAMILY. TASMANIAN MARY DONALDSON WED CROWN PRINCE FREDERIK IN COPENHAGEN

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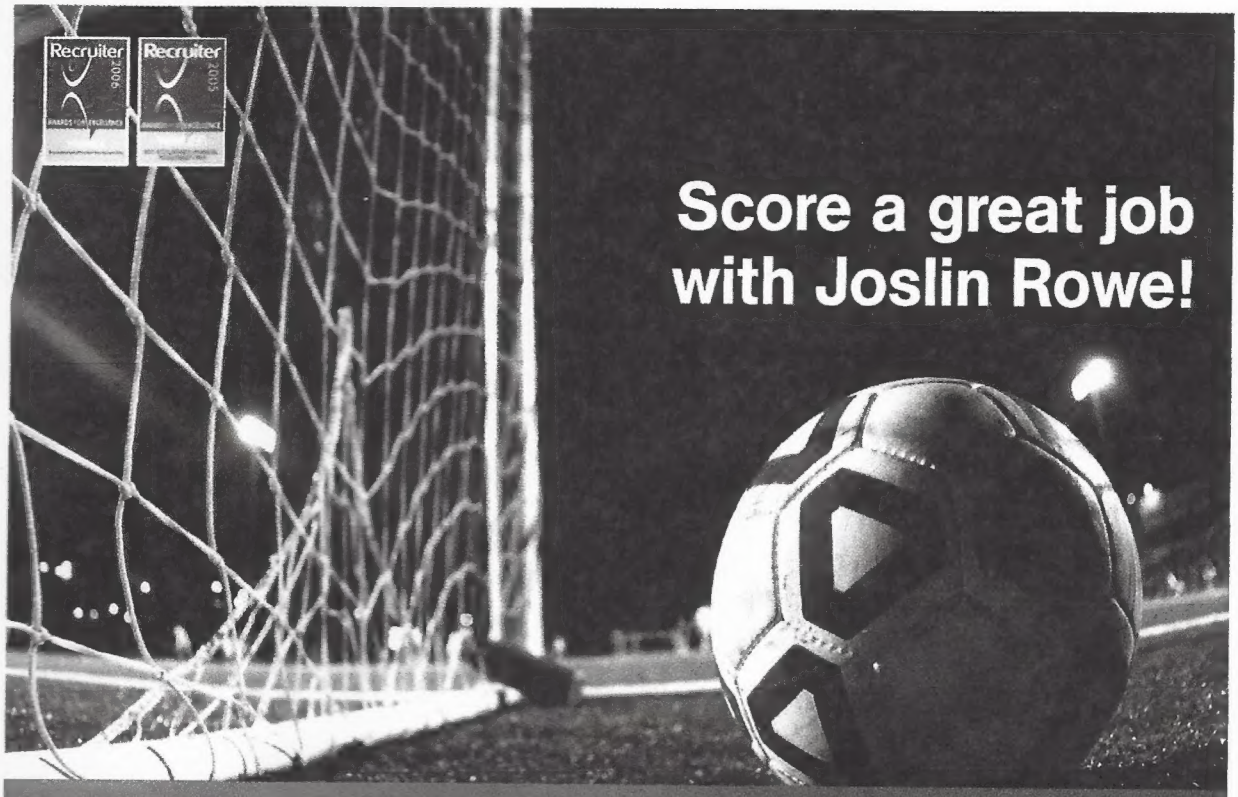

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